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THE EFFECT OF WORKLOAD AND PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCE ON IMPROVING TEACHER PERFORMANCE WITH THE MERDEKA TEACHING PLATFORM (PMM) AS A MODERATION VARIABLE

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Abstract:

This study aims to analyze the influence of workload and professional competence on improving teacher performance, with the Independent Teaching Platform (PMM) as a moderation variable. The research method used is quantitative with a survey approach, where data is collected through questionnaires distributed to teachers of Elementary School Group IX, Wara Timur District, Palopo City. Data analysis was carried out using multiple linear regression analysis and Moderated Regression Analysis (MRA) with the help of SmartPLS 3.3 software. The results showed that the teacher's workload did not have a significant influence on improving performance, while professional competence was proven to have a significant influence on improving teacher performance. However, the Merdeka Mengajar (PMM) platform does not moderate the influence of professional competence or workload on performance improvement. These results show that the improvement of teachers' professional competence plays a greater role in improving performance than the workload and that the role of the Merdeka Mengajar (PMM) platform in supporting performance improvement still needs to be optimized.

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Keywords:

Workload; Performance; Professional Competence; Freedom of Learning; Platform.

Introduction

Education is the main factor in efforts to develop intelligence, mastery of Technology (IT), and the formation of human personality. A superior education system is expected to give birth to a quality next generation of the nation. The improvement of the education system in Indonesia is increasingly ongoing in order to improve, improve the quality and overcome problems that always exist and never end because education will always change with the times and the progress of culture, society, knowledge and technology. According to the opinion (Rosyada et al., 2021). The policy to improve the quality of education is dynamic, because the improvement of the quality of education does not stop with certain achievements, but continues to change in accordance with social, political, economic, industrial, scientific and technological conditions, but to achieve these goals teacher performance must be improved. Teacher performance has a direct effect on the quality of education for each student. The better the teacher's performance, the better the quality of education will be. This means that if teachers have good performance, the results of the teaching and learning process will also be good, along with the teacher's workload through administrative completeness as a support in learning. For this reason, performance plays an important role in achieving optimal teaching goals. Given the importance of this performance role, schools need to improve teacher performance so that teaching goals can be achieved optimally (Fitriani, 2018).

Competence of a teacher is a teacher's mastery of skills, understanding and knowledge in carrying out the learning and learning process. This teacher's professional competence is also the authority and ability of teachers to carry out their professional duties as teachers. In Law No. 14 of 2005 itself in the article contained in article 1 paragraph 10 concerning Teachers and Lecturers, this Competence is a skill, skill and also behavior that must be possessed by a teacher or lecturer to carry out his procession (Rahimah, 2021). Competence of a teacher is a teacher's mastery of skills, understanding and knowledge in carrying out the learning and learning process. This teacher's professional competence is also the authority and ability of teachers to carry out their professional duties as teachers. In Law No. 14 of 2005 itself in the article contained in article 1 paragraph 10 concerning Teachers and Lecturers, this Competence is a skill, skill and also behavior that must be possessed by a teacher or lecturer to carry out his procession (Dewi & Rahmawati, 2021).

Research related to PMM has been carried out by several previous researchers, including (Eryanti, 2024), PMM Platform for the Implementation of the Independent Curriculum in Elementary Schools, then Improving the Competence of Elementary School Teachers through PMM (Aulia et al., 2023). The Utilization of PMM to Improve Teacher Competence in Vocational High Schools (Rahmadani & Kamaluddin, 2023), Optimizing the Utilization of PMM in the Implementation of Independent Learning Through Workshops for Elementary Education Units (Muadz, 2023).



In the context of this research, the government's support for curriculum changes in the educational aspect will be analyzed through aspects related to the world of education to all levels starting from the Kindergarten level to Higher Education. However, there is still minimal discussion about improving performance in the use of the independent teaching platform to improve the professionalism and quality of elementary school teachers. Based on the description above, it is necessary to **formulate a problem:** How does workload and professional competence affect the performance of elementary school teachers through the Independent Teaching Platform (PMM). Therefore, the researcher will examine and analyze the influence of workload and professional competence on the performance of elementary school teachers in cluster IX, East Wara District, Palopo city with the Independent Teaching Platform (PMM) as a moderation variable.

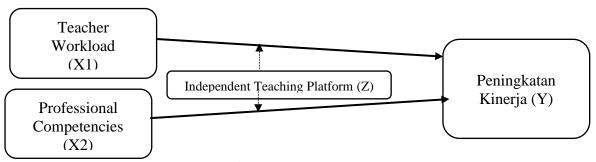


Figure 1: Research Model

In figure 1. There are 4 main variables in this study, namely teacher workload (X1), professional competence (X2), independent teaching platform (Z), and teacher performance (Y). These variables will be studied in depth to find out the relationship between the variables that have been described in the theoretical framework.

Literatur Review

Workload

Curriculum is a set of plans and arrangements regarding the objectives, content, and subject matter as well as methods used as guidelines for the implementation of learning activities to achieve certain educational goals (Law Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System Article 1 point 19). In Indonesia itself, there are several curricula that have been implemented, namely the 1947, 1952, 1964, 1968, 1975, 1984, 1994, 2004, 2006, 2013 to the latest is the Independent Curriculum. (itjen.kemdikbud.go.id). Changes in the curriculum are commonplace for the purpose of developing and improving the competence of graduates (Yusnita et al., 2021).

Regarding the change of curriculum, this greatly affects the teacher's workload which is one of the important factors that can improve the quality of student learning and go hand in hand with the professional to the teacher, namely the duty and responsibility of a teacher is to complete the material, therefore, it is necessary to make efforts to optimize the teacher's workload in order to provide good quality educational services for students, with indicators: a) Work conditions, namely work conditions seen from how an employee understands his work well, b) the use of working time, namely the use of working time in accordance with KOSP, c) targets that must be achieved, namely: targets set by the education unit. Based on these arguments, the following hypotheses can be formulated:



H1: Teachers' workload has a positive effect on performance improvement

Teacher Performance

Teacher competency development is part of the development of human resources that are quality in learning. With the development of this performance, it will have an impact on the development of good human resource resources for the advancement of education in Indonesia itself. Performance development that is carried out continuously will increase teacher competence. With the improvement of the competence of quality teachers, the teacher can be responsible for his or her duties professionally. The development of increasing performance can encourage changes in students and society from the challenges of this increasingly rapid era. Performance development accompanied by this competency will be closely related to the career development of the teacher's professionalism itself. Teachers' professional competencies are one of the four competencies that must be possessed, which include mastery of science, development of learning materials, and the use of information technology for self-development (Ruhita, 2023). This is in line with Lestari's opinion which emphasizes the importance of pedagogic competence in managing learning and understanding students (Lestari, 2023). The development of increasing performance can encourage changes in students and society from the challenges of this increasingly rapid era. Performance development accompanied by this competency will be closely related to the career development of the teacher's professionalism itself. Teacher competency development must also be carried out on an ongoing basis. Nugraheni and Jailani stated that sustainable professional development (PKB) contributes to improving teacher competence and student learning outcomes (Nugraheni & Jailani, 2020). This shows that regular evaluation and assessment of teacher competencies is essential to ensure that teachers continue to develop and meet the standards required in education. Research by Sumiati also emphasizes the importance of structured training programs and professional development activities to improve teacher competence (Sumiati, 2023). Because if a teacher does not follow this performance development, it will be difficult to reach higher professionalism (Rahimah, 2021). According to McKinsey & Company, (2020) to improve performance, a diverse and inclusive workplace can increase creativity, innovation, and innovation. This can be measured through indicators such as: a) the percentage of employees/teachers from various backgrounds, b) employees/teachers' perceptions of inclusivity in the workplace, c) the number of employee/teacher resource groups, d) the level of participation in diversity and inclusion training programs. Based on these arguments, the following hypotheses can be formulated:

H2: Professional competence has a positive effect on performance improvement

Professional Competencies

The Independent Learning Policy, Independent Campus set out in the independent curriculum has been proclaimed by the government to give freedom and autonomy to educational institutions so that educational institutions are independent from bureaucratization. Teachers' professional competence is the ability of teachers to carry out their duties as educators which includes pedagogical mastery, knowledge, methodology, management, and so on which is reflected in performance in the educational environment. This is required so that educators further improve their performance so that students have high motivation to learn in order to achieve optimal learning achievement.



Teachers have access to self-training resources at any time and from any location to meet the workload that has been set through a letter of completion. The material consists of a series of short training sessions and a portfolio called Proof of My Work, which serves as a means to showcase educators' achievements, abilities, and performance in general. Professional teachers if they have expertise, skills, or abilities that must master it as a whole, and meet certain quality standards or norms and require professional education. By mastering various sciences or subjects taught by an educator, the indicators are: a) Mastering to develop material, b) Structure and concepts, c) Scientific Mindset, d) Competency Standards, e) Basic Competencies of the subjects taught, f) Professionalism in a Sustainable Manner, h) Utilizing Information Technology. Based on these arguments, the following hypotheses can be formulated:

H3: The Independent Teaching Platform (PMM) moderates the positive relationship of professional competence to performance improvement

Independent Teaching Platform (PMM)

The Independent Teaching Platform (PMM) was created to help educators in learning according to the abilities and characteristics of students, the Independent Teaching Platform (PMM) has an independent training feature to grow and develop educator skills and can produce a product that can work to inspire other educators. Growing and developing skills does not know when and where. The Independent Teaching Platform (PMM) was created for educators and school leaders to jointly support the learning process to be more innovative and creative that is focused on students. The MerdekaMengajar Platform (PMM) is a learning resource and can be applied according to the needs and results of student evaluation. As a forum for sharing practices, the Independent Teaching Platform (PMM) provides features for work. Therefore, the government has prepared various facilities for educators and education through the Independent Teaching Platform (PMM) Application, to get various ways of convenience so that the quality of education is much better. PMM can improve teachers' ability to utilize information technology to improve the quality of learning and self-development, teachers' understanding of the independent curriculum, and improve teachers' professional competence (Shandilia Latunusa Ambawani et al., 2023).

Educators can communicate and exchange effective techniques on the Merdeka Teaching Platform (Eryanti, 2024). Therefore, the indicators of the Independent Teaching Platform are a) various kinds of teacher competencies, namelypedagogic competence: student-centered ability, personality competence: steady nature, noble character, wisdom, and authority, social competence: the ability to interact as a whole, professional competence: the ability to carry out teachers' professional duties in accordance with their field of expertise. b) Navigation Ability: How easy and fast the user navigates inside application, c) task completion: How efficiently the user can complete the desired task by using the application. d) customization: How much the user can customize the application according to their needs and preferences, e) troubleshooting: how well the user can overcome the problems that arise while using the application. f) Automation: how much the user can use the automation features that the application offers. Based on these arguments, the following hypotheses can be formulated:

H4: Independent Teaching Platform (PMM) moderation of positive relationship between workload and workload improvement

Methodology

Population and Sample

This research was carried out in several elementary schools, precisely Cluster IX, East Wara District, Palopo City. Random data collection methods equipped with informant demographics such as gender, age, and last education. This study uses a likert scale with the data sources in this study are active civil servant and non-civil servant teachers. In the first stage, 80 (eighty) teachers are targeted with the aim of making quantitative conclusions. Furthermore, 20 (twenty) teachers were randomly assigned which each consisted of 15 (Fifteen) Civil Servant Teachers, 5 (Five) Non-Civil Servant Teachers from several Elementary Schools who were included in Cluster IX. So the total number of samples in this study is 100 samples.

Item Measurement and Scale

The use of existing measurement items is generally considered a better practice compared to undertaking a rough development, given the complexity of scale development (Latan et al., 2021). The use of existing measurement items is generally considered a better practice compared to undertaking a rough development, given the complexity of scale development

Data Collection and Analysis Procedures

Data analysis will be carried out using descriptive statistics to describe the demographic profile of the respondents and the distribution of answers. Reliability tests (Cronbach's alpha) and construct validity (factor analysis) will be carried out on the scale used. Furthermore, Moderated Regression Analysis will be used to test whether the Independent Teaching Platform (PMM) moderates the relationship between workload and professional competence towards work improvement, with the help of SmartPls 3.3 software.

Research Activities

In the world of education, almost every school, including elementary schools in the city of Palopo, has implemented an independent curriculum. In order to realize to educators and education staff in order to build trust in fostering students, they must be able to quickly and accurately master what is in the Merdeka Teaching Platform (PMM) application without physical and mental pressure, so that this research is expected to make an adequate contribution both theoretically and practically and can be implemented by interested parties based on the concept Theory of Reasoned Action, this theory refers to how a person behaves without being affected by external pressure that can hinder or support the achievement of the person's intentions. That is, this theory emphasizes that a person is motivated to choose on the basis of self-control to be able to feel the desired result.

Results and Discussion

Respondent Overview

In this study, the general description of respondents was used in the survey based on gender, age and recent education. For more details about the general overview of the respondents, can be seen in the table below.



Table 1. Respondent Overview

Characteristics Responden	Sum	%
Gender		
Woman	70	70
Man	30	30
Sum	100	100
Usia		
18-25 Year	30	30
26-35 Year	45	45
36-45 Year	20	20
Diatas 46 Year	5	5
Sum	100	100
Last Education		
D3/S1	80	80
S2	20	20
Sum	100	100

In table 1. It can be seen that female teachers who are respondents dominate (70%) compared to male teachers (30%). Meanwhile, in terms of age, the average is still young and productive, which is between 18-45 years old (95%). Meanwhile, in terms of education, there are 80 people (80%) with D3 and Bachelor education, and 20 people (20%) have completed a master's degree.

Validity and Reliability Test

Model Validity Test

The validity test used to assess the validity level of the VB-SEM model in this study is the validity of Convergen. There are two ways to determine the validity of the SEM model with convergent validity techniques, namely looking at the outer loading value (Loading factor) and the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value.

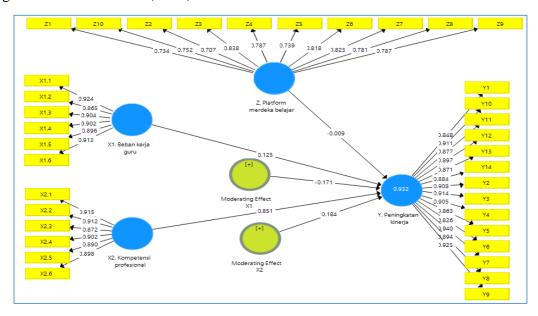


Figure 2. Outer Model PLS-SEM



The required factor loading value is >0.7 In the validity test carried out, it is known that all indicators have a value of >0.7. The SEM model that has been declared valid is presented in figure 2 and table 1.

Table 2. Validity and Reliability of the PSL-SEM Model

Cut								
Variabl e	Indicato r	Loadin g factor	off Valu e	AVE	Validit y	Cronbach' s Alpha	CR	Reliabilit y
X1	X1.1	0.924	0.7		valid			
	X1.2	0.865	0.7		valid	0.953		
	X1.3	0.904	0.7	0.81	valid		0.96	D 11 11
	X1.4	0.902	0.7	1	valid		3	Reliable
	X1.5	0.896	0.7		valid			
	X1.6	0.913	0.7		valid			
	X2.1	0.915	0.7		valid			
	X2.2	0.912	0.7		valid			
V2	X2.3	0.872	0.7	0.80	valid	0.052	0.96	Daliabla
X2	X2.4	0.902	0.7	7	valid	0.952	2	Reliable
	X2.5	0.890	0.7		valid			
	X2.6	0.898	0.7		valid			
	Z 1	0.734	0.7		valid	0.932		
	Z2	0.752	0.7		valid		0.93	Daliakla
	Z 3	0.707	0.7		valid			
7	Z 4	0.838	0.7		valid			
	Z 5	0.787	0.7	0.60	valid			
Z	Z 6	0.739	0.7	5	valid		8	Reliable
	Z 7	0.818	0.7		valid			
	Z 8	0.823	0.7		valid			
	Z 9	0.781	0.7		valid			
	Z10	0.787	0.7		valid			
	Y1	0.848	0.7		valid	0.980	0.98	Reliable
	Y2	0.911	0.7		valid			
	Y3	0.877	0.7		valid			
	Y4	0.897	0.7		valid			
	Y5	0.871	0.7		valid			
	Y6	0.884	0.7		valid			
Y	Y7	0.908	0.7	0.79	valid			
1	Y8	0.914	0.7	4	valid			
	Y9	0.905	0.7		valid			
	Y10	0.863	0.7		valid			
	Y11	0.826	0.7		valid			
	Y12	0.940	0.7		valid			
	Y13	0.894	0.7		valid			
	Y14	0.925	0.7		valid			



The value that measures the validity of the SEM model based on Average Variance Extracted (AVE) is > 0.5. Based on Table 2, the AVE values for all variables observed in this study >0.5 so it can be said that all variables are valid and can be used to test the SEM model.

Model Reliability

Reliability is a measure of the consistency of indicators in measuring their variables. The values used to determine the level of reliability of the SEM model are Composite Reliability and Cronbach Alpha. This type of reliability serves to determine the internal reliability level of variable indicators. The standard value of Cronbach's Alpha is a variable so that it is declared reliable is > 0.6, while the standard value for Composite Reliability is >0.7. Therefore, based on table 2 above, it is known that all variables have a Cronbach's Alpha value of >0.06 and a Composite Reliability value of >0.7 so that it can be stated that the analyzed SEM model is reliable.

Variable Influence Analysis and Hypothesis Test

SEM analysis aims to test the magnitude of the influence of independent variables on dependent variables. The SEM model results of the analysis of the influence between variables are shown in the Figure below.

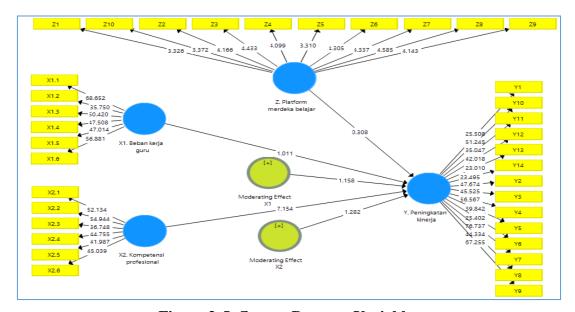


Figure 3. Influence Between Variables

The analysis of the influence of variables observed in this study is the influence of teacher workload variables and professional competence on performance improvement (Y) and the analysis of moderator variables (independent learning platform). The analysis is also used to test research hypotheses. The magnitude of the influence of these variables is shown in Table 2.



Table 3. Influence Of Variables

Influence between variables	T Statistics	T Tabel	P Values	Cut off P value	Hipotesis
Moderating Effect X1 -> Y. Peningkatan kinerja	1.158	1.98	0.247	0.05	Rejected
Moderating Effect X2 -> Y. Peningkatan kinerja	1.282	1.98	0.200	0.05	Rejected
X1. Beban kerja guru -> Y. Peningkatan kinerja	1.011	1.98	0.313	0.05	Rejected
X2. Kompetensi profesional -> Y. Peningkatan kinerja	7.154	1.98	0.000	0.05	Accepted

Based on Table 2 above, hypothesis tests can be carried out as follows:

Hypothesis 1: It is suspected that the teacher's workload has a significant effect on improving performance. The results of the statistical T analysis obtained a calculated t value = 1.011< t table = 1.98 with a P Value of 0.313 or greater than the Cut off Value of 0.05. This means that the variable of teacher workload does not have a significant effect on improving performance. So it can be stated that hypothesis 1 is rejected.

Hypothesis 2: It is suspected that professional competence has a significant effect on performance improvement. The results of the statistical T analysis obtained a calculated t value = 7,154> t table = 1.98 with a P Value of 0.000 or smaller than the Cut off Value of 0.05. This means that the professional competency variable has a significant effect on improving performance. So that it can be stated that hypothesis 2 is accepted.

Hypothesis 3: It is suspected that the Merdeka Teaching (PMM) platform moderates the influence of professional competence on performance improvement. The results of the statistical T analysis obtained a calculated t value = 1.282< t table = 1.98 with a P Value of 0.200 or greater than the Cut off Value of 0.05. This means that the variable of the Merdeka Teaching platform (PMM) does not moderate the influence of professional competence on performance improvement, so it can be stated that hypothesis 3 is rejected.

Hypothesis 4: It is suspected that the Independent Teaching (PMM) platform moderates the influence of workload on performance improvement. The results of the statistical T analysis obtained a calculated t value = 1.158 < t table = 1.98 with a P Value of 0.247 or greater than the Cut off Value of 0.05. This means that the work motivation variable does not moderate work discipline to work productivity. So it can be stated that hypothesis 4 is rejected.

Discussion

Effect of Workload on Performance Improvement

The first hypothesis states that the teacher's workload is suspected to have a significant effect on improving performance. However, based on the results of the statistical analysis carried out, the calculated t-value of 1.011 is smaller than the table's t-value of 1.98. In addition, the resulting P Value is 0.313, which is greater than the Cut off Value of 0.05. This shows that statistically, the teacher's workload does not have a significant influence on performance improvement.



This factor can be caused by various reasons, one of which is that a high workload is not always accompanied by an increase in performance, but can actually cause stress or fatigue that negatively affects performance. In addition, there may be other variables that are more dominant in influencing teacher performance, such as work environment, motivation, or teacher welfare, which are not considered in this study.

Thus, the hypothesis that the teacher's workload has a significant effect on performance improvement is rejected. This indicates that in the context of this study, the workload is not enough to be used as the main indicator in improving teacher performance. Further research may be needed to explore other variables that significantly affect teacher performance.

The Effect of Professional Competence on Performance Improvement

The second hypothesis states that teachers' professional competence is suspected to have a significant effect on performance improvement. Based on the results of the analysis, it was found that the calculated t-value of 7.154 was much greater than the table's t-value of 1.98. In addition, the P Value obtained was 0.000, which is much smaller than the Cut off Value of 0.05, which shows that professional competence has a significant influence on improving teacher performance.

These results are consistent with the theory that teachers with high professional competence tend to have better abilities in carrying out their duties, which ultimately contributes to improved performance. Professional competence includes the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed by teachers to carry out their duties effectively, so it is not surprising that these variables show a significant influence on performance.

Thus, the second hypothesis is accepted. This emphasizes the importance of improving professional competence in order to improve teacher performance. Educational institutions and related parties should pay more attention to the development of teachers' professional competencies as part of efforts to improve the quality of education.

Independent Teaching Platform Does Not Moderate The Influence Of Workload On Performance Improvement

The third hypothesis states that the Merdeka Mengajar (PMM) platform is suspected of moderating the influence of professional competence on performance improvement. However, the results of statistical analysis show that the calculated t-value of 1.282 is smaller than the t-value of the table of 1.98, and the P Value of 0.200 is greater than the Cut off Value of 0.05. This means that the Merdeka Mengajar (PMM) platform does not moderate the influence of professional competence on performance improvement.

This result may be caused by several factors, such as limitations in the use or implementation of the PMM platform that has not been maximized by teachers. It could be that the platform is not fully integrated into the teaching process, or teachers have not fully utilized the existing features to improve their performance. Additionally, it is possible that while these platforms offer a wide range of resources and training, their effects on teacher performance may not be as strong as other factors such as intrinsic motivation or work experience.

Thus, the third hypothesis was rejected. This shows that, in the context of this study, the Merdeka Mengajar (PMM) platform does not have a significant moderation role in the relationship between professional competence and teacher performance improvement. Further research may be needed to evaluate how these platforms can be optimized to have a greater

impact on improving teacher performance.

The Independent Teaching Platform does not moderate the influence of professional competence on performance improvement

The fourth hypothesis states that the Merdeka Teaching (PMM) platform is suspected of moderating the influence of workload on performance improvement. Based on the results of the analysis, it was found that the calculated t-value of 1.158 was smaller than the table's t-value of 1.98, with a P Value of 0.247 which was greater than the Cut off Value of 0.05. This shows that the Independent Teaching (PMM) platform does not moderate the influence of workload on improving teacher performance.

These results can be interpreted as follows: although the Merdeka Mengajar (PMM) platform can provide additional support to teachers, such as access to learning and training materials, it is not enough to reduce the negative impact of high workloads on teacher performance. The high workload may include aspects such as administration, learning planning, and additional tasks, which cannot be fully managed through the use of digital platforms.

Therefore, the fourth hypothesis is rejected. This indicates that the Merdeka Mengajar (PMM) platform has not been able to be an effective solution in overcoming the negative impact of high workloads on teacher performance. Further research needs to be done to explore how these platforms can be better integrated in an effort to support teachers in managing their workloads, as well as how other aspects of the workload can be addressed to improve overall performance. Previous research such as those conducted by Kartika (2023) and Widhiarso (2017) supports this finding, namely that the use of the Independent Teaching Platform (PMM) does not have a significant effect on teacher readiness, both in terms of improving performance and workload as well as the implementation of the independent curriculum (Kartikasari et al., 2023) .

Conclusion and Advice

Based on the results of the study, it can be concluded that the teacher's workload does not have a significant influence on improving performance, while professional competence is proven to have a significant influence on improving teacher performance. However, the Merdeka Mengajar (PMM) platform does not moderate the influence of professional competence or workload on performance improvement. These results show that the improvement of teachers' professional competence plays a greater role in improving performance than the workload and that the role of the Merdeka Mengajar (PMM) platform in supporting performance improvement still needs to be optimized.

Based on the findings of this study, it is recommended that school management emphasize more on effective workload management and the provision of relevant and sustainable competency development programs for teachers. In addition, to maximize the benefits of the Independent Teaching Platform, it is necessary to make improvements in terms of training in the use of the platform, as well as the development of features that are more integrated with the specific needs of teachers in the process (Marisana et al., 2023)Learning. Stakeholders should also consider a more comprehensive approach, which combines technology with managerial and interpersonal support to truly improve teacher performance.



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